

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1 - 11. (cancelled)

12. (currently amended) A method of making bristle arrangements for subsequent use in a brush seal, comprising the steps of:

providing a fixture having a shuttle with a side wall having an annular shoulder portion and a base fitting within said shuttle;

arranging a plurality of tufts of bristles each having a bead at one end within a said base of said fixture so that said bristles with said beads extend beyond the base and are placed against the annular shoulder;

said arranging step comprising placing each said tuft in the fixture in a skewed fashion relative to a line extending radially from a center of the fixture;

said arranging step further comprising placing each said tuft in said fixture so that a portion of the bristles forming each tuft with said bead project from said fixture to form a plurality of exposed portions; and

joining said exposed portions together while said tufts are in said fixture using a welding machine so as to form said bristle arrangements.

13. (cancelled)

14. (cancelled)

15. (original) The method as recited in claim 12, wherein said plurality of bristles are metallic.

16. (previously presented) The method as recited in claim 12, further comprising the step of securing the bristle arrangements between plates subsequent to said joining step to form a brush seal.

17. (previously presented) The method as recited in claim 12, wherein said arranging step comprises arranging said tufts in an arc.

18. (original) The method as recited in claim 17, wherein said arc is a circle.

19. (original) The method as recited in claim 17, wherein the joining step occurs at an outer diameter or an inner diameter of said arc.

20. (original) The method as recited in claim 17, wherein the joining step creates a continuous joint along said arc.

21 - 23. (cancelled)

24. (currently amended) A method of making a brush seal having multiple stages, comprising the steps of:

providing discrete plates and discrete bristle arrangements within a fixture;

creating a stack of said discrete plates and discrete bristle arrangements to define said multiple stages of said brush seal within said fixture; ~~and~~

simultaneously ~~joining~~ welding said stack of said discrete plates and said discrete bristle arrangements together while in said fixture to create said multiple stages of said brush seal; and

removing said multiple stage brush seal from said fixture.

25. (original) The method as recited in claim 24, wherein said bristle arrangement includes:

a plurality of bristles arranged along a length; and

a joint extending along said length and securing said plurality of bristles together.

26. (original) The method as recited in claim 25, wherein said plurality of bristles are arranged in an arc, and said joint extends along said arc.

27. (original) The method as recited in claim 26, wherein said arc is a circle.

28. (original) The method as recited in claim 25, wherein said joint extends continuously along said length.

29. (cancelled)

30. (currently amended) The method as recited in claim ~~29~~ 24, wherein said discrete plate providing step include providing a windage cover.

31 - 43. (cancelled)

44. (currently amended) A method for forming a brush seal comprising the steps of:

providing a fixture having a base and a plurality of adjacent guides;

arranging a plurality of tufts of bristles in a said fixture between adjacent ones of said guides;

spreading said bristles in a uniform fashion around said fixture; and

welding said bristles together to form a one-piece bristle ring.

45. (currently amended) A method for forming a multiple stage brush seal comprising the steps of:

placing a first plate in a fixture;

placing a first bristle ring on the first plate while said first plate is in said fixture;

placing a second plate over the first bristle ring while said first bristle ring is in said fixture;

placing a second bristle ring over the second plate while said second plate is in said fixture;

placing a third plate over the second bristle ring while said second plate is in said fixture; and

fusion welding the first plate, the first bristle ring, the second plate, the second bristle ring, and the third plate in a single step in said fixture to form said multiple stage brush seal;

removing the multiple stage brush seal from said fixture after said fusion welding step.

46. (previously presented) The method according to claim 45, wherein said first plate placing step comprises placing a back plate in the fixture.

47. (previously presented) The method according to claim 45, wherein said second plate placing step comprises placing a middle plate in the fixture.

48. (previously presented) The method according to claim 45, wherein said third plate placing step comprises placing a windage cover in said fixture.

49. (previously presented) The method according to claim 45, wherein said fusion welding step comprises welding the first, second and third plates and the first and second bristle rings together while

the first, second and third plates and the first and second bristle rings are in the fixture.

50. (new) The method according to claim 44, further comprising:

placing said tufts in the fixture in a skewed fashion relative to a line extending radially from a center of the fixture so as to orient the bristles in a direction that a rotating part of an engine rotates.

51. (new) The method according to claim 44, further comprising:

providing a shuttle having a side wall with an annular shoulder surrounding said base;

providing each of said tufts with a bead; and

placing said beads of the tufts against the annular shoulder.

52. (new) The method according to claim 44, further comprising:

providing a cover with fasteners to secure the cover to the base; and

tightening the fasteners to spread apart the bristles in a uniform fashion around the fixture.

53. (new) The method according to claim 52 wherein said welding step is performed while said cover is secured to said base.

54. (new) The method according to claim 45, further comprising forming each of said first and second bristle rings by providing an additional fixture having a base and a plurality of adjacent guides;

arranging a plurality of tufts of bristles in said additional fixture between adjacent ones of said guides;

spreading said bristles in a uniform fashion around said additional fixture; and

welding said bristles together to form a one-piece bristle ring.